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DR. BUMP TO IMPORT GAME BIRDS FROM MIDDLE EAST

The introduction of desert-bred game birds from the Middle East to similar localities in this country is approaching realization, the Department of the Interior announced today. This summer, the Fish and Wildlife Service is again sending its foreign game-bird specialist, Dr. Gardiner Bump, to Turkey, Syria, Iraq and also Iran, if conditions permit, to trap certain species of nonmigratory game birds for shipment to the United States.

In 1950, Dr. Bump spent six months in Middle Eastern deserts and mountains studying and collecting desirable species not destructive to crops or native birds. During this time, he found four species worth a trial introduction in parts of the West and Southwest. Last month he made a thorough inspection of Southwestern habitats where the birds will be eventually liberated.

Scheduled to leave this country on June 24, Dr. Bump plans to spend six to eight months live-trapping from 200 to 500 of each species selected. To guard against disease these birds will be quarantined for one month overseas, then shipped by Scandinavian Airlines to New York City. There they will go through three week's quarantine at the United States Bureau of Animal Industry's Station at Clifton, New Jersey. Then they are sent to the carefully selected areas in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah chosen in co-operation with the game departments of each State. Selection of these sites was based on similarity of topography, water quantity, climate, and food supply with those of countries in which the birds now live.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wildlife Management Institute, and the State game commissions will work under a co-operative agreement insuring close scientific control for the new inhabitants.

In this way, the importation of foreign game birds is more likely to succeed than other large-scale attempts in the past which lacked adequate biological research and proper habitat investigation.

Chukar partridge--an ideal hunting bird because of its fast flight--is to be caught in Turkey and Syria. Oriental sand grouse, related to the pigeon family, will come from the vast plains and uplands of Anatolia, Turkey. Sand partridge, or seese, will be trapped in northern Iraq (Mesopotamia). This bird makes the best eating of the four species. It is like our quail in size.

Most beautiful bird will be the black partridge, or francolin, which sports a silly black breast spotted with dashes of white. They are found in the historically ancient valleys of Euphrates and Tigris Rivers near fabled Babylon in Iraq.

Dr. Bump's assistant will be James Cox, a State biologist of N. M. He will help in trapping and care of those birds earmarked for importation.

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